

JOB DESCRIPTION

Trust Accountant/CFO

Job Title:	Trust Accountant/CFO
Contract Type:	Permanent, Term time only plus 30 days
Responsible to:	Executive Headteacher/CEO
Responsible for:	Trust Finance Officer
Annual Salary:	PO 4 - £49,764 - £52,805
Hours:	37 hours per week

Background: Our schools are located in Worcestershire with our Head Office based at The Tulip Tree Centre, in Catshill in Bromsgrove. The Trust is a mix of Church of England and non-Church of England first and middle schools. You will be based at our Head office and travel to schools as required and the Trust facilitates flexible working

Main Purpose of the role:

Working with the Executive Headteacher/CEO, Board of Trustees and Senior Leaders, the Management Accountant will help to maintain the financial health of the Trust and its link Academies keeping abreast of funding and legislative changes that apply to the education sector and providing stakeholders with strategic financial information to enable them to make informed financial decisions in a timely manner.

The role will provide critical financial insights and support to the Trust's leadership team and Trust Business Managers. The role involves analysing financial data, preparing reports, supporting schools and offering actionable recommendations to help drive the Trust's financial planning and operational decisions.

Responsible for the line management of the finance team and managing the Trust's financial position, ensuring financial systems and activity are enablers of school improvement.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- To be the lead in the Trust's financial sustainability, continually evaluating the robustness and effectiveness of appropriate financial systems and processes to drive financial efficiency across the Trust.
- To lead the work of the finance team, ensuring regularity and compliance.
- To co-ordinate with the work of the external auditor to prepare and submit audited statutory consolidated accounts
- To prepare and present short and long term budget projections, and monitor financial performance, constantly driving greater financial knowledge and effectiveness across the Trust.
- To work in alliance with School and Trust leaders so all parties have a good working knowledge of the Trust budget model, strategic and operational aims.
- Provide assurance to the Trust Board and the Executive Headteacher/CEO about overall financial matters, including financial strategy and risk, systems of internal financial control, financial standing and sustainability of the Trust's financial position.
- To promote best practice and to ensure compliance with the financial processes and procedures set out in the policies of the Trust and in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook, and the requirements of regulators.
- Ensure the timely completion of all financial and academy-related returns including to the DfE, HMRC, Companies House, Teacher Pensions Authority and the Local Government Pension Scheme administrators.
- Contribute to the strategic direction of the Trust and the development and implementation of the Trust's strategic plans in line with the overall vision and ethos of the Trust.
- Work alongside the Executive Headteacher/CEO and other Trust leaders to effectively and efficiently 'on-board' new schools to the Trust. This will include supporting the undertaking of due diligence and scrutiny of the school's financial standing and planning.
- Line management responsibility for the central Trust Finance team, liaising with the Headteachers and school business managers on financial performance as required.
- To provide training, as required, to meet the needs of the Trust,

Management Accounting

- Support the Headteacher and academy's leadership team in the preparation of the annual budget, and maintain and update the academy's 3 – year budget projection plan. Considering DfE and relevant government guidelines and other sources of information about budget trends and local pupil demographics, reviewing on an annual basis
- Perform full month-end reconciliations and period closures, identifying any errors, and taking corrective action to ensure the Trial Balance and Balance Sheet are correct
- Monitor the Academy's income and expenditure throughout the year, comparing to budget, and advise the Headteacher of potential over or under-spends, risks, and necessary virements.
- Flex and revise the budget termly as required by changes in operational circumstances.
- Produce accurate monthly, quarterly, and annual management accounts and other financial information and reports as required, in a timely manner, and in a format understandable and suited to the audience.
- In conjunction with the Executive Headteacher/CEO, support and challenge Headteachers and Trust leaders to develop optimum budgets for each school and consolidate these into an overall Trust budget, ensuring all appropriate priorities are met.

- Meet periodically with Headteachers to review the academy's I&E and financial position (balance sheet) including regular review of cash flow.

Financial Accounting

- Assist in the preparation of the year-end financial statements and other periodic and statutory submissions e.g. Annual Accounts Return, VAT claims.
- Update, maintain and become expert in the management accounting system for the academies and trust.
- Prepare financial reports for the Executive Headteacher/CEO and Trustees and attend meetings to review those reports when required to do so.
- Meet with the Executive Headteacher/CEO to review financial performance and KPIs across the academies.
- Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit requirements. Implement audit recommendations in full to an agreed timescale.
- Ensure that the annual accounts are properly audited, presented and adequately supported by underlying evidence, including the maintenance of effective systems of internal control as outlined in the Academy's Handbook.
- To develop and implement plans to respond to and meet the expectations set out in any management letters or audit actions.
- Be responsible for the allocation to academies of all grant funding including the retention of top-slice and other central service fees

Financial Leadership

- Oversee all day-to-day transactions in the Trust and academies' ledgers, ensuring accuracy, completeness, and conformity to Trust procedures and audit standard, reporting any issues to the Executive Headteacher/CEO.
- Conduct performance management for the finance officers and assistants.
- Verify and authorise the journal transactions of other finance staff in all ledgers.
- Provide training and support to other finance officers and staff within the Trust when required, as new academies join the Trust.
- Identify and implement improvements to the finance function to the benefit of the Trust, its academies, and their stakeholders.

Financial Transactions

- Collate the trust's monthly VAT returns and prepare and submit a periodic claim to HMRC ensuring claims are full, complete, legitimate, and that claims are received in good time.
- Ensure that all grant funding receivable by the trust and its academies is received in full and on time.
- To oversee appropriate credit control processes thus ensuring that the swift payment of outstanding sums and overseeing the recovery of VAT as appropriate.
- Be the administrator for the Trust and its academies' bank accounts, including setting up new accounts, users, coordinating their starter packs, applying access rights, authorisation rights, and delivering training when required.
- Monitor the Trust's cash flow and bank accounts, ensuring liquidity is maintained.
- Be the administrator for the Trust and its academies credit cards, including setting-up new card accounts for joining academies.
- When required, undertake routine transactions in Purchase Ledger, Sales Ledger, Cash Book, and Nominal Ledger.

People and relationships

- Develop and maintain effective professional working relationships with the Members, Trustees, Executive Leaders, Heads and Staff.
- Establish and maintain good professional relationships and ensure effective communication across the schools in the Trust and other stakeholders.
- Support the Heads and staff responsible for finance at Trust and Academy level.
- To demonstrate a high level of professionalism and confidentiality at all times, be able to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines.

Other duties

- Attend and participate in meetings as required.
- Contribute to the overall work ethos and aims of the Trust and its academies.
- Maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job, participate in appropriate training activities and encourage and support staff in their development and training.
- Undertake such other duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required and which are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this job.
- Undertake health and safety duties commensurate with the post and/or as detailed in the Directorate's Health and Safety Policy.

Notes:

- The Trustees reserves the right to alter the content of this Job Description, after consultation, to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility.
- The duties described in this Job Description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Signed.....

Date.....

Signed.....

Date.....

**Executive Headteacher/CEO
The Spire Learning Trust**

